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ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2176	

DATE MAILED: 11/23/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE _3_ MONTH(S) FROM
THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.
- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed
  after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
  Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any
  earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on _21 June 2000_.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**.   2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is
   closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) _1-28_ is/are pending in the application.

   4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) _1-28_ is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

   Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

   Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

   a)☐ All   b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

   1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

   2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

   3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage
      application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

   * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1)☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   4)☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2)☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)   Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
3)☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)   5)☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
   Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ .   6)☐ Other: _____ .

DETAILED ACTION

1.   This action is responsive to communications: Amendment filed 6/22/04.

2.   Claims 1-28 are pending. Claims 1, 5, 13 and 21 are independent claims.

Claims 21-28 are newly added claims. Claims 13 and 16 have been amended.

3.   US Patent 6,067,551, Brown et al. has been utilized as a 35 USC 102 reference

for claims 1-2, 4-8, and 13-16. Effective November 29, 1999, subject matter which was

prior art under former 35 U.S.C. 103 via 35 U.S.C. 102(e) is now disqualified as prior art

against the claimed invention if that subject matter and the claimed invention "were, at

the time the invention was made, owned by the same person or subject to an obligation

of assignment to the same person." Thus Examiner has utilized Moody et al., US

5,890,177 for claims 1, 3, 5, 9-10, 13, 17-18, 11-12 and 19-20. See below.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

4.   The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

> The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of
> making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the
> art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall
> set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

5.   Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply

with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which

was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one

skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had

possession of the claimed invention.

Prompting a user to merge copies when opening a local copy for editing appears

to conflict with Applicant's invention and specification. On page 2 of Applicant's

specification, Applicant teaches that the method of permitting users to merge local

changes back into a shared copy of the document is unacceptable because it requires a

user to implement a central document repository for managing the document library.

The repository may require a separate central server to handle requests for checking

documents in and out of the repository and thus it is consumptive of the system

resources and can slow user access to the documents. Applicant's disclosure generally

teaches prompting a user for reconciling a conflict which occurs when two or more

users attempt to make inconsistent modifications to the same document. For example,

USER A may wish to replace a sentence in the original document, while USER B

wishes to delete the sentence entirely. Applicant's disclosure teaches that when a

determination is made as to whether the original document is in use by another user. If

the original document is not in use by another user, the original document is simply

opened. Because there is no potential for conflict among simultaneous editors in this

case, the method proceeds to and ends. If a determination is made that the original

document is in use by another user, the user is alerted that the original document is

currently opened for editing by another user. The method then proceeds and the user is

prompted to select between three choices. The user may open a copy of the original

document as a read-only copy. The user may also create a local copy for making

modifications that may be subsequently merged with the original document. Finally, the

user may elect to be notified when the original document becomes available. However,

it is unclear to Examiner where in the specifications the limitation, "in response to an

attempt to open the stored local copy, to provide a prompt to merge the local copy with

the original document" is taught. Clarification is requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

6.   The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that

form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

> A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –
>
> (e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

7.   Claims 1-2, 4-6, 8, 13-14, and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being

anticipated by Brown et al., US 6,067,551, 5/23/00 (filed 11/14/97).

The applied reference has a common assignee with the instant application.

Based upon the earlier effective U.S. filing date of the reference, it constitutes prior art

under 35 U.S.C. 102(e). This rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) might be overcome

either by a showing under 37 CFR 1.132 that any invention disclosed but not claimed in

the reference was derived from the inventor of this application and is thus not the

invention "by another," or by an appropriate showing under 37 CFR 1.131.

In reference to claim 1, Brown teaches a simultaneous multi-user editing of a

document. See abstract. Compare to *"a method for enabling simultaneous multi-*

user editing of an original document". Brown's system comprises the following:

-Allowing a user to access a document for editing. See column 1, lines 45-55.

Compare to *"receiving a request form a first user to open the original document"*.

-Recognizing multiple-user editing of the document. Compare to *"determining whether the original document is in use by a second user"*. See column 2, lines 45-65 and column 18, lines 45-65

-Creating a local copy of the document for editing by each user where the first copy duplicates the master copy. Compare to *"in response to a determination . . .creating a local copy and storing a path of the original document"*. See column 18, lines 45-65 and column 2, lines 45-65.

-In response to a save operation, if a current edit is being made to a paragraph in the master copy, the user's local copy is updated to correlate with the latest saved version of the master copy, while preserving current edits still pending. If an edit is not being made by another user, then updating the local copy with the latest saved version of the master copy. See figures 2A-2E and figure 3 and column 11, lines 15-67. Compare to *"in response to a receipt of a request to save changes. . .determining whether the original document is still in use by another user; in response to a determination that the original document is not still in use by another user, merging the local copy with the original document; in response to a determination that the original document is still in use by another user. . .subsequent merge of the saved local copy and the original document can be performed."*

In reference to claim 2, Brown teaches a unlock/lock flag associated with a master copy to indicate whether the copy is in use or not by another user. See column 11, lines 43-50.

In reference to claim 4, Brown teaches that In response to a save operation, if a current edit is being made to a paragraph in the master copy, the user's local copy is updated to correlate with the latest saved version of the master copy, while preserving current edits still pending. Once the local copy is merged with the master copy, the edits are saved in the master copy for future use. See figures 2A-2E and figure 3 and column 11, lines 15-67.

In reference to claim 5, Brown teaches a simultaneous multi-user editing of a document. See abstract. Brown's system comprises the following:

-Allowing a user to access a document for editing. See column 1, lines 45-55. Compare to *"receiving a request form a first user to open the original document"*.

-Recognizing multiple-user editing of the document. See column 2, lines 45-65 and column 18, lines 45-65. Creating a local copy of the document for editing by each user where the first copy duplicates the master copy. Compare to *"in response to a determination . . .creating a local copy and storing a path of the original document"*. See column 18, lines 45-65 and column 2, lines 45-65.

-Upon a user saving and closing the master copy, the user version number is compared to that one user to the master copy version identifier number and based on that comparison, reconciling the master copy and the local copy of the document. If there is a conflict, the reconciliation waits until the pending edits takes place. Meanwhile, a different user can access the master copy. See columns 13-14, "Reconciliation Procedure" and "Conflict Resolution Procedure", lines 43-52. See also figures 2A-2E and 3 and columns 11, lines 15-67 and 18-19. Compare to *"notifying the first user*

that the original document is no longer in use. . .merging changes. . .identified by the stored path".

In reference to claim 6, recognizing multiple-user editing of the document. See column 2, lines 45-65 and column 18, lines 45-65. Creating a local copy of the document for editing by each user where the first copy duplicates the master copy. See column 18, lines 45-65 and column 2, lines 45-65.

In reference to claim 8, upon a user saving and closing the master copy, the user version number is compared to that one user to the master copy version identifier number and based on that comparison, reconciling the master copy and the local copy of the document. If there is a conflict, the reconciliation waits until the pending edits takes place. Meanwhile, a different user can access the master copy. See columns 13-14, "Reconciliation Procedure" and "Conflict Resolution Procedure", lines 43-52. See also figures 2A-2E and 3 and columns 11, lines 15-67 and 18-19.

In reference to claim 13, Brown teaches a simultaneous multi-user editing of a document. See abstract. See figure 2A for the file server. Compare to *"a file server operative to maintain an original document at a document location; a document editor operative to make changes to the original document"*. Brown teaches a unlock/lock flag associated with a master copy to indicate whether the copy is in use or not by another user. See column 11, lines 43-50. Compare to *"set a flag on the original document, the flag indicating that the original document is in use by a first user"*. If the flag is locked, then the re is a specified amount of time to allow the master file to be set in unlock mode so that the user's local copy overwrites the master

copy. See figures 2A-2E. Brown further teaches that a user's local copy must first be updated from the master copy before a local copy can be saved. The user's latest saved local copy is compared to the master copy in a paragraph-by-paragraph manner to determine if any subsequent edits made to the master copy were to a specific paragraph that was edited by the user since the last save operation. Thus it identifies whether conflicts are present with respect to any of the current edits being made. If there are conflicts, a dialog box is displayed to the user interface screen that displays the conflicts that are present and requests the user to either "accept" or "reject" each of the conflicting previous edits. See column 14 "Conflict Resolution Procedure". See columns 13-14. Compare to *"in response to determination that the flag is set. . .create a local copy of the original document and to store the document location with the local copy, and in response to an attempt to open the stored local copy, to provide a prompt to merge the local copy with the original document. so that the change to the local copy can be merged with the original document at a later time."*

In reference to claim 14, Brown teaches recognizing multiple-user editing of the document. See column 2, lines 45-65 and column 18, lines 45-65. Creating a local copy of the document for editing by each user where the first copy duplicates the master copy. See column 18, lines 45-65 and column 2, lines 45-65.

In reference to claim 16, If the flag is locked, then the re is a specified amount of time to allow the master file to be set in unlock mode so that the user's local copy overwrites the master copy. See figures 2A-2E.

In reference to claim 21, Brown teaches a simultaneous multi-user editing of a
document. See abstract. Compare to *"a method for enabling simultaneous multi-
user editing of an original document file without reference to a multi-user control
file"*. Brown's system comprises the following:

-Allowing a user to access a document for editing. See column 1, lines 45-55.
Compare to *"receiving a request form a first user to open the original document"*.

-Recognizing multiple-user editing of the document. Compare to *"determining
whether the original document is in use by a second user"*. See column 2, lines
45-65 and column 18, lines 45-65

-Creating a local copy of the document for editing by each user where the first copy
duplicates the master copy. Compare to *"in response to a determination . . .creating
a local document file. . . and storing a path of the original document. . ."*. See
column 18, lines 45-65 and column 2, lines 45-65.

-In response to a save operation, if a current edit is being made to a paragraph in the
master copy, the user's local copy is updated to correlate with the latest saved version
of the master copy, while preserving current edits still pending. If an edit is not being
made by another user, then updating the local copy with the latest saved version of the
master copy. See figures 2A-2E and figure 3 and column 11, lines 15-67. Compare to
*"in response to a receipt of a request to save changes. . .determining whether the
original document is still in use by another user; in response to a determination
that the original document is not still in use by another user, merging the local
copy with the original document; in response to a determination that the original*

document is still in use by another user, saving the local document file with the

path. . .part of the local document file."

- Brown teaches that a user's local copy must first be updated from the master copy

before a local copy can be saved. The user's latest saved local copy is compared to the

master copy in a paragraph-by-paragraph manner to determine if any subsequent edits

made to the master copy were to a specific paragraph that was edited by the user since

the last save operation. Thus it identifies whether conflicts are present with respect to

any of the current edits being made. If there are conflicts, a dialog box is displayed to

the user interface screen that displays the conflicts that are present and requests the

user to either "accept" or "reject" each of the conflicting previous edits. See column 14

"Conflict Resolution Procedure". See columns 13-14. Compare to *"in response to a*

request from a user to open the saved local document file, prompting the user to

merge. . .the original document file; wherein the original document file is

progressively updated with merged edits. . .may be accessed by subsequent

editors".

     In reference to claim 22, Brown teaches a simultaneous multi-user editing of a

document. See abstract. Brown's system comprises the following:

-Allowing a user to access a document for editing. See column 1, lines 45-55.

Compare to *"receiving a request form a first user to open the original document".*

-Recognizing multiple-user editing of the document. See column 2, lines 45-65 and

column 18, lines 45-65. Creating a local copy of the document for editing by each user

where the first copy duplicates the master copy. Compare to *"in response to a*

determination . . .creating a local copy and storing a path of the original

document". See column 18, lines 45-65 and column 2, lines 45-65.

-Upon a user saving and closing the master copy, the user version number is compared

to that one user to the master copy version identifier number and based on that

comparison, reconciling the master copy and the local copy of the document. If there is

a conflict, the reconciliation waits until the pending edits takes place. Meanwhile, a

different user can access the master copy. See columns 13-14, "Reconciliation

Procedure" and "Conflict Resolution Procedure", lines 43-52. See also figures 2A-2E

and 3 and columns 11, lines 15-67 and 18-19. Compare to *"notifying the first user*

that the original document is no longer in use. . .merging changes. . .identified by

the stored path".

In reference to claim 23, upon a user saving and closing the master copy, the

user version number is compared to that one user to the master copy version identifier

number and based on that comparison, reconciling the master copy and the local copy

of the document. If there is a conflict, the reconciliation waits until the pending edits

takes place. Meanwhile, a different user can access the master copy. See columns 13-

14, "Reconciliation Procedure" and "Conflict Resolution Procedure", lines 43-52. See

also figures 2A-2E and 3 and columns 11, lines 15-67 and 18-19.

Claims 24-28 are rejected under the same rationale used in claims 2, 3, 10, 11,

and 12 above.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

8.   The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

9.   Claims 7 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brown et al., US 6,067,551, 5/23/00 (filed 11/14/97) in view of Pham et al., US 6,560,719 B1, 6,560,719B1, filed 5/17/00.

In reference to claims 7 and 15, Pham teaches a system in which a remote platform is enabled to duplicate each registry key change in a local platform. See abstract. Pham also teaches that a backup of a registry key from a local computer to a remote computer is kept in order to synchronize the data involved upon the occurrence of any changes. Furthermore, a duplicate copy is always stored and available should any problem occur with the local platform such as a modification. See column 2, lines 45-67. It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to incorporate registry key association with a local copy in the system of Brown because it keeps the user from having to provide a manual backing-up of the registry keys everytime something is updated. See column 2, lines 1-15. Furthermore, it saves a considerable amount of time and effort to accomplish the synchronization process. See column 2.

10.   Claims 1, 3, 5, 9-10, 13, and 17-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Moody et al., US 5,890,177, 3/30/99 (filed 4/24/96).

In reference to claims 1 and 3, Moody teaches a method for consolidating edits made by multiple editors working on multiple document copies. Each editor edits his own document copy using an editing application. The editing copies are consolidated to make a final document copy by eliminating duplicate text in sections. Moody teaches having an original document and edited document copies. See figure 3. See figures 4A-4C in which the save function is disclosed. The original document is compared to the edited copy and if there is a match with the paragraphs, changes are made. In consolidating the documents, the system waits until all the editors have completed their copies in order to merge. Compare to *"receiving a request from a first user to open the original document. . .determining whether the original document is in use by a second user. . .is in use. . .creating a local copy and storing a path of the original document; in response to the receipt of a request to save changes to the local cop, determining whether the original document is still in use by another user. . .not still in use. . .merging the local copy with the original document. . .is still in use. . .saving the local copy with the path of the original document, such that a subsequent merge of the saved local copy and the original document can be performed"*. While Moody does not state that if the original document is still in use, a local copy with the path of the original document is saved for a subsequent merge; however, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to recognize that the "edited copies" are stored until the other edited copies are complete, thus Moody is saving those local or edited copies until all editors have completed their editing. See figure 3 and columns 4-5. Moody further teaches that the local copies of the documents

are transmitted via the Internet or email and given to the editors. See column 4, lines

30-40. Moody further teaches that the editors can return the edited copies to the author

by means of e-mail or other transmission. See column 4, lines 43-64. This email is

then used in the consolidation process.

In reference to claims 5, 9, 13, and 17, Moody teaches a method for

consolidating edits made by multiple editors working on multiple document copies.

Each editor edits his own document copy using an editing application. The editing

copies are consolidated to make a final document copy by eliminating duplicate text in

sections. Moody teaches having an original document and edited document copies.

See figure 3. See figures 4A-4C in which the save function is disclosed. The original

document is compared to the edited copy and if there is a match with the paragraphs,

changes are made. In consolidating the documents, the system waits until all the

editors have completed their copies in order to merge. Moody teaches a means

responsive to the identification of the second section for creating a consolidated

document which simultaneously displays both edited and unedited portions of each of

the first and the second sections and a means responsive to the creation of the

consolidated document for determining changes between the first section and the

second section; editing means controlled by user commands for selecting desired

changes to be made in the first section from the determined changes and a means

responsive to a user command for forming the final document which includes the

unedited portions of the first section and the selected desired changes. Compare to

"receiving a request from a first user to open the original document . .

.determining whether the original document is in use by a second user. . .is in use. . .creating a local copy and storing a path of the original document; in response to the receipt of a request to save changes to the local cop, determining whether the original document is still in use by another user. . .not still in use. . .merging the local copy with the original document. . .is still in use. . .saving the local copy with the path of the original document, such that a subsequent merge of the saved local copy and the original document can be performed". While Moody does not state that if the original document is still in use, a local copy with the path of the original document is saved for a subsequent merge; however, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to recognize that the "edited copies" are stored until the other edited copies are complete, thus Moody is saving those local or edited copies until all editors have completed their editing. See figure 3 and columns 4-5. Moody further teaches that the local copies of the documents are transmitted via the Internet or email and given to the editors. See column 4, lines 30-40. Moody further teaches that the editors can return the edited copies to the author by means of e-mail or other transmission. See column 4, lines 43-64. This email is then used in the consolidation process.

In reference to claims 10 and 18, Moody teaches a method for consolidating edits made by multiple editors working on multiple document copies. Each editor edits his own document copy using an editing application. The editing copies are consolidated to make a final document copy by eliminating duplicate text in sections. Moody teaches having an original document and edited document copies. See figure 3.

See figures 4A-4C in which the save function is disclosed. The original document is compared to the edited copy and if there is a match with the paragraphs, changes are made. In consolidating the documents, the system waits until all the editors have completed their copies in order to merge.   Compare to *"receiving a request from a first user to open the original document. . .determining whether the original document is in use by a second user. . .is in use. . .creating a local copy and storing a path of the original document; in response to the receipt of a request to save changes to the local cop, determining whether the original document is still in use by another user. . .not still in use. . .merging the local copy with the original document. . .is still in use. . .saving the local copy with the path of the original document, such that a subsequent merge of the saved local copy and the original document can be performed"*. While Moody does not state that if the original document is still in use, a local copy with the path of the original document is saved for a subsequent merge; however, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to recognize that the "edited copies" are stored until the other edited copies are complete, thus Moody is saving those local or edited copies until all editors have completed their editing. See figure 3 and columns 4-5. In providing a copy of the original document via email, the user is supplying the path of the original copy. See figure 2B.

11.   Claims 11-12 and 19-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over <u>Moody et al.</u>, US 5,890,177, 3/30/99 (filed 4/24/96) in view of <u>Thorne et al.</u>, US 5,958,005, 11/28/99 (filed 7/17/97).

In reference to claims 11-12 and 19-20, Moody teaches a method for consolidating edits made by multiple editors working on multiple document copies. Each editor edits his own document copy using an editing application. The editing copies are consolidated to make a final document copy by eliminating duplicate text in sections. Moody teaches having an original document and edited document copies. See figure 3. See figures 4A-4C in which the save function is disclosed. The original document is compared to the edited copy and if there is a match with the paragraphs, changes are made. In consolidating the documents, the system waits until all the editors have completed their copies in order to merge. Compare to *"receiving a request from a first user to open the original document. . .determining whether the original document is in use by a second user. . .is in use. . .creating a local copy and storing a path of the original document; in response to the receipt of a request to save changes to the local cop, determining whether the original document is still in use by another user. . .not still in use. . .merging the local copy with the original document. . .is still in use. . .saving the local copy with the path of the original document, such that a subsequent merge of the saved local copy and the original document can be performed"*. While Moody does not state that if the original document is still in use, a local copy with the path of the original document is saved for a subsequent merge; however, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to recognize that the "edited copies" are stored until the other edited copies are complete, thus Moody is saving those local or edited copies until all editors have completed their editing. See figure 3 and columns 4-5. Moody does not

teach inserting a default entry into the subject or message body field of the email note;

however, Thorne does. Thorne teaches a method for communicating data text

messages such as e-mail in which the fields are filled with default values so that the

user can retain all the values without having to compose the message. See column 7,

lines 1-15 and abstract. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at

the time of the invention to incorporate Thorne's default entry into email fields in the

system of Moody since a default entry keeps the user from having to enter information

into the fields. See column 7, lines 1-15 of Thorne.

Response to Arguments

12.   Applicant's arguments filed 6/22/04 have been fully considered but they are not

persuasive. This action is non-final since Examiner changed the rejection with respect

to claims 7 and 15.

Applicant argues with respect to claim 1 that Brown does not teach "in response

to determination that the original document is in use by another user, creating a local

copy and storing a path of the original document". Examiner respectfully disagrees.

Brown specifically teaches the creation of a multi-user control file (MCF) that tracks the

various versions of the master copy of the document that are being edited by the users.

Brown discloses that when a master copy is first accessed by a user, the processor

creates a MCF and local copies of the documents for other remote users. See column

3, lines 45-65, column 4, lines 7-27, and figure 2A. The master copy and local copies

are also assigned version identifiers. The master copy and local copies are then edited

by users simultaneously.

With respect to claim 5, Applicant argues that Brown does not discuss "monitoring the original document and notifying the user when the original is no longer in use". Examiner respectfully disagrees. Brown teaches that upon a user saving and closing the master copy, the user version number is compared to that one user to the master copy version identifier number and based on that comparison, reconciling the master copy and the local copy of the document. If there is a conflict, the reconciliation waits until the pending edits takes place. Meanwhile, a different user can access the master copy. See columns 13-14, "Reconciliation Procedure" and "Conflict Resolution Procedure", lines 43-52. See also figures 2A-2E and 3 and columns 11, lines 15-67 and 18-19.

With respect to amended claims 13, 4, 8, and 16, Applicant argues that both Brown and Moody fail to disclose the new limitation where a document editor operative to provide a prompt to merge the local copy with the original document in response to an attempt to open the stored local copy. Brown further teaches that a user's local copy must first be updated from the master copy before a local copy can be saved. The user's latest saved local copy is compared to the master copy in a paragraph-by-paragraph manner to determine if any subsequent edits made to the master copy were to a specific paragraph that was edited by the user since the last save operation. Thus it identifies whether conflicts are present with respect to any of the current edits being made. If there are conflicts, a dialog box is displayed to the user interface screen that displays the conflicts that are present and requests the user to either "accept" or "reject"

each of the conflicting previous edits. See column 14 "Conflict Resolution Procedure".
See columns 13-14.

Moody teaches consolidating edits into an original document upon saving
changes to a local copy. Moody does not merge the copies until all local copy editors
have completed the editing. The prompt to merge the copies is received when all users
have completed their tasks. When a user opens a local copy for editing, the document
presented is the consolidated version of the previous local copies. Moody teaches a
means responsive to the identification of the second section for creating a consolidated
document which simultaneously displays both edited and unedited portions of each of
the first and the second sections and a means responsive to the creation of the
consolidated document for determining changes between the first section and the
second section; editing means controlled by user commands for selecting desired
changes to be made in the first section from the determined changes and a means
responsive to a user command for forming the final document which includes the
unedited portions of the first section and the selected desired changes.

Furthermore, prompting a user to merge copies when opening a local copy for
editing appears to conflict with Applicant's invention and specification. On page 2 of
Applicant's specification, Applicant teaches that the method of permitting users to
merge local changes back into a shared copy of the document is unacceptable because
it requires a user to implement a central document repository for managing the
document library. The repository may require a separate central server to handle
requests for checking documents in and out of the repository and thus it is consumptive

of the system resources and can slow user access to the documents. Applicant's

disclosure generally teaches prompting a user for reconciling a conflict which occurs

when two or more users attempt to make inconsistent modifications to the same

document. For example, USER A may wish to replace a sentence in the original

document, while USER B wishes to delete the sentence entirely. Applicant's disclosure

teaches that when a determination is made as to whether the original document is in

use by another user. If the original document is not in use by another user, the original

document is simply opened. Because there is no potential for conflict among

simultaneous editors in this case, the method proceeds to and ends. If a determination

is made that the original document is in use by another user, the user is alerted that the

original document is currently opened for editing by another user. The method then

proceeds and the user is prompted to select between three choices. The user may open

a copy of the original document as a read-only copy. The user may also create a local

copy for making modifications that may be subsequently merged with the original

document. Finally, the user may elect to be notified when the original document

becomes available. However, it is unclear to Examiner where in the specifications the

limitation, "in response to an attempt to open the stored local copy, to provide a prompt

to merge the local copy with the original document" is taught. Clarification is requested.

With respect to claims 6 and 14, Applicant argues that the path of the original

document is not stored. Brown teaches creating a local copy of the document for

editing by each user where the first copy duplicates the master copy. See column 18,

lines 45-65 and column 2, lines 45-65. It is inherent in Brown's system that the

duplicate copies of the master copy would be linked to the path of the original document that is used by the MCF.

In reference to claims 7 and 15, Applicant argues that Brown does not teach registry keys and requested a reference. Examiner presents <u>Pham et al.</u>, US 6,560,719 B1. Pham teaches a system in which a remote platform is enabled to duplicate each registry key change in a local platform. See abstract. Pham also teaches that a backup of a registry key from a local computer to a remote computer is kept in order to synchronize the data involved upon the occurrence of any changes. Furthermore, a duplicate copy is always stored and available should any problem occur with the local platform such as a modification. See column 2, lines 45-67. It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to incorporate registry key association with a local copy in the system of Brown because it keeps the user from having to provide a manual backing-up of the registry keys everytime something is updated. See column 2, lines 1-15. Furthermore, it saves a considerable amount of time and effort to accomplish the synchronization process. See column 2.

With respect to claims 1 and 5, Applicant argues that Moody does not teach "in response to the receipt of a request to save changes to the local copy, determining whether the original document is still in use by another user" and "in response to a determination that the original document is not still in use by another user, merging the local copy with the original document." Moody teaches that the system waits until all the editors have completed their copies in order to merge the edits into an original. See figures 3, 4A-4C and columns 4-5. While Moody does not state that if the original

document is still in use, a local copy with the path of the original document is saved for

a subsequent merge; however, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the

art to recognize that the "edited copies" are stored until the other edited copies are

complete, thus Moody is saving those local or edited copies until all editors have

completed their editing. See figure 3 and columns 4-5. Moody further teaches that the

local copies of the documents are transmitted via the Internet or email and given to the

editors. See column 4, lines 30-40. Moody further teaches that the editors can return

the edited copies to the author by means of e-mail or other transmission. See column

4, lines 43-64. This email is then used in the consolidation process.

Newly added claims 21-28 have been rejected above. In response to applicant's

amendments, the phrase "editing an original document file without reference to a multi-

user control file" has not been given patentable weight because the recitation occurs in

the preamble. A preamble is generally not accorded any patentable weight where it

merely recites the purpose of a process or the intended use of a structure, and where

the body of the claim does not depend on the preamble for completeness but, instead,

the process steps or structural limitations are able to stand alone. See *In re Hirao*, 535

F.2d 67, 190 USPQ 15 (CCPA 1976) and *Kropa v. Robie*, 187 F.2d 150, 152, 88

USPQ 478, 481 (CCPA 1951).

Conclusion

13.   Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the

examiner should be directed to Rachna Singh whose telephone number is 571-272-

4099. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (8:30-6).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's

supervisor, Joseph Feild can be reached on 571-272-4090.

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RS
11/15/04

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